

## Against the Grain

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# Remembering 1968...

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# Against the Grain

*"Linking Publishers, Vendors and Librarians"*

## Remembering 1968 ....

by **Bruce Heterick** (Director, Library Relations, JSTOR) <bruce.heterick@jstor.org>

With the pending national election in the U.S., it's popular to wax nostalgic about one of the most volatile and influential years in the brief (by most measures) history of the United States. 1968. Forty years ago. In a year characterized by tumultuous change, 1968 was also the year that **Garrett Hardin** published his famous essay in *Science*, "The Tragedy of the Commons,"<sup>1</sup> as well as the year that **Elvis Presley** starred in the musical comedy, *Live a Little, Love a Little*.

It should not be lost on us that today — some 40 years later — through the work of libraries as well as the longevity of paper and film, scholars still have ready access to **Hardin's** article and **Elvis's** faithful can still catch a glimpse of "The King" on film. It should also not be lost on us that neither **Hardin's** article nor **Elvis's** movie were "born-digital," and as we continue the shift from paper and film to

ones and zeros, access to the born-digital content is not guaranteed.

In September 2005, a number of academic librarians, university administrators, and other interested individuals met at the offices of **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** to discuss the conundrum that the academic community was facing with regard to the long-term preservation of electronic journals. Coming out of that meeting was a statement, edited by **Don Waters** of the **Mellon Foundation**, entitled, "Urgent Action Needed to Preserve Scholarly Electronic Journals."<sup>2</sup> The "Urgent Action Statement" — as it was to become known throughout the library community — became a seminal reference point for the scholarly community in its effort to raise awareness of this important problem with a variety of stakeholders; including librarians, university administrators, scholarly publishers, faculty, and funding agencies.

The statement was formally endorsed by **ARL**, **ACRL**, **ALCTS**, and **ICOLC**, as well as being adopted informally by a myriad of other organizations. It spurred tremendous interest about the topic over the next year (2006) with college/university libraries. Nearly every library/scholarly communications conference entertained presentations and panels on the topic of e-journal preservation. Preservation initiatives such as **Portico**, **LOCKSS**, and **CLOCKSS** received a great deal of attention, and the publishing community began to give earnest attention to the issue.

It has now been three years since the "Urgent Action Statement." There are many

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## If Rumors Were Horses

So much is going on that it's hard to keep track of it all! Gosh! Where to start. And, you know, we are posting **Rumors on the ATG News Channel** — <http://www.against-the-grain.com> — frequently, nearly every day. It's impossible to put all of those **Rumors** in print so you need to go to the Website to keep up!

First up, **Deb Vaughn**, our book review editor, has a **baby girl!!!** Congrats to **Deb** and her husband, **Bo Crader**, on the birth of their daughter, **Helen Katherine Crader** born August 12th, 2008, at 9:50



PM weighing in at 7 lbs. 2 oz. **Deb** is on maternity leave at the moment but she is still working on **ATG**. See this issue, p. 63.

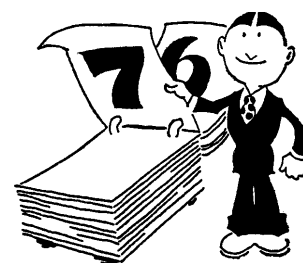
Speaking of new babies, **Cullen Ferguson** just turned **one year old!** How time flies!

Remember last year when he was just born? And exposure to chicken pox kept them away from **Charleston** in 2007!

And speaking of **Cris**, her report on the **8th Annual Mid-South E-Resource Symposium** will be loaded on the **ATG News Channel** shortly, before it appears in print. [www.against-the-grain.com/](http://www.against-the-grain.com/)

And some non-baby news for a change of pace. **Congratulations! Andrew Hutchings** has been appointed **Blackwell Group Chief Executive Officer**. In his new role **Andrew** will have full responsibility for both **Blackwell Book Services** and **Blackwell UK Ltd.** **Andrew** takes up his new role with immediate effect and the **BUK Board** now report directly to him. **Andrew** joined **Blackwell's** Oxford office in 1987 when he led both the Information Technology and Marketing departments in Oxford while also completing the **Blackwell's** Management Training program. After a three-year assignment in **Blackwell USA** Oregon offices leading the integration of the global

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**HP:** We offer flexible licensing models. The concurrent user model is very popular, though many institutions do prefer the unlimited site license. Individual titles may also be licensed at both the individual and institutional levels, however, with fewer special features and functionalities.

**ATG:** *What might be some features to look forward to in future enhancements? What are some industry trends you hope to follow or consider? Or perhaps you want to set some new industry standards?*

**HP:** The value and importance of providing educational and high-quality online multimedia resources has been thoroughly impressed upon us as we have launched the specialty Websites. Online users want to not only read what the best minds in the field think on a topic, but they also want to be able to view a Grand Rounds from a renowned lecturer at a different institution, watch a surgical video while listening to a detailed explanation of the operational approach, or view an animation demonstrating how to conduct a key physical examination. Technical enhancements to these resources will be made to make our multimedia even more practical and usable and engaging. Going forward we intend to increase the media on **AccessMedicine** and apply these lessons learned. 🌸

**Editor's Note:** Thank you, **Helen**, for your answers. Good Luck with the latest redesign and have fun planning future enhancements. — **RKK**

### Rumors from page 10

haven't read this article yet, check it out. **Bell** and **John Shank** have come up with a "re-designed" librarianship. Is blended librarianship a model for proactive librarians? [home.learnintimes.net/library?go=1845668](http://home.learnintimes.net/library?go=1845668)

**My bosom swelled with pride** (à la **Gilbert and Sullivan's HMS Pinafore**) when the alert **Joyce Ogburn** sent me the URL to this write up about the **AAUP (American Association of University Presses)** recent meeting in Montreal. ("Digital Daze" by **Scott McLemee**). Reportedly the **Charleston Conference** and **ATG** were mentioned repeatedly in **AAUP** meetings, panels, and less formal discussions. **ATG** was hailed as a "must-read for anyone in academic publishing who wants a glimpse of how their colleagues across campus are discussing the new information tools." But then, you knew that already, didn't you? [www.insidehighered.com/views/2008/07/02/mclemee](http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2008/07/02/mclemee)

And more praise for the **Charleston Conference** courtesy of the alert **Dr. Elaine Yontz** <[eyontz@valdosta.edu](mailto:eyontz@valdosta.edu)>. It's a paper on an **MLIS** student's attendance at the **Charleston**

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## against the grain people profile

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**BORN AND LIVED:** Born in Blacksburg, VA; currently live in Barrington, RI.

**PROFESSIONAL CAREER:** Did my undergraduate and graduate work at **Virginia Tech**; started my career as a developer at **Virginia Tech**, then worked for **VTLS**, **Faxon**, **Blackwells**, **SCT/SunGuard**, and **JSTOR** for the past nine years.

**FAMILY:** Married to **Jill** for past 20 years; 4 children (**Wesley-16**, **Miller-13**, **Sloane-9**, **Cary-6**).

**PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD:** People who take themselves too seriously; bad pizza; Rhode Island government.

**PHILOSOPHY:** Be happy where you are, but not content.

**MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT:** Working at **JSTOR**.

**SPARE TIME:** Golf and Virginia Tech sports.

**FAVORITE BOOKS:** *For One More Day*.

**GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW:** Run an organization that is doing something important and meaningful.

**HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS:** See my "Shift Happens" presentation from 2007 **Charleston Conference**. 🌸



### Remembering 1968 ... from page 1

accomplishments that we — as a community — can point to and say "good job." Most of the major publishers (commercial, university presses, and societies) have adopted a long-term preservation strategy for their e-journal content and a few are getting out ahead of the issue with eBooks. "At-risk" content is getting some focus, as are open-access journals. Third-party preservation initiatives have moved from infancy to early adolescence, and important lessons have been learned and shared with the community. Preservation choices have emerged for libraries and publishers: commercial vs. not-for-profit; 3rd-party vs. national vs. local solutions; migration strategies vs. emulation strategies, etc., etc. And, for the first time, academic libraries in particular are beginning to see that there is a sustainable migration path from print to electronic.

But the work is not yet done. Preservation and archiving is a community-wide problem that requires contributions from across the community, lest we endure a tragedy of the commons. There are still too many free riders relying on the work and contributions of the few; too many libraries allowing a small number of their colleagues to carry the "preservation freight" on behalf of the entire library community; too many institutions talking about the importance of the long-term preservation of born-digital content, but still too few willing to ante up and support the still-nascent initiatives that are attempting to address — collectively — this

preservation challenge. It is a classic manifestation of the "commons dilemma" that **Hardin** described in his influential 1968 article.

There is no doubt that this remains fairly new and complex territory. While there has been good progress, we are not yet near the point of having the robust, comprehensive, and multi-layered solution we need to have in place to confidently make the complete transition to electronic access, with all of its benefits. And, the long-term preservation of electronic journals is not, and cannot be regarded as, just a "large research library problem." It is a community problem that requires broad support across the spectrum of libraries — higher education in particular. Every survey that I have seen on the topic — including the **Ithaka/Portico** survey outlined in this issue — leave no doubt that librarians philosophically believe that the long-term preservation of these assets is incredibly important. However, as they say, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. So, as **Elvis** sings in his 1968 classic, "a little less conversation, a little more action please."

Whoduva thunk that **Garrett Hardin** and **Elvis Presley** had so much in common? 🌸

#### Endnotes

1. **Garrett Hardin**, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science, New Series*, Vol. 162, No. 3859 (Dec. 13, 1968), pp. 1243-1248. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1724745>
2. Association of Research Libraries Website: [http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/ejournalpreservation\\_final.pdf](http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/ejournalpreservation_final.pdf).